TK 177 It is therefore likely that the ganyēn idea was brought to the Abyssinian highlands from Southern Arabia about 500 B.C., superimposed on the earlier "buda" and "zar" beliefs, but reduced to the bottom scale of the spirit world with the coming of Coptic Christianity in the 4th and 5th centuries A.D.[122]

TK The ganyēn are considered by the Amhara wholly evil. In personality they are choleric, male quickly aroused to aggressive rage. They are believed to be of dark complexion. They are so tough "they can eat stones". They attack men far more often than women and in daylight rather than at night, (exact opposite of the zar). They cause neither hysteria nor apathy, rather they cause their victim to run amok.

• 682 754 As a result, the legal significance of the ganyēn possession in Amhara society is considerable. Almost every apprehended murderer claims that the ganyen "pushed his hand". He thus "was not himself". In the old tradition, if evidence for actual ganyen possession was deemed sufficient, the excuse brough sufficient mitigation so that the kin of the murdered individual could accept blood-money from the murderer and his kin without a blood-feud and without losing prestige. In such a case, the priest-confessor or "mänfas gubaē", acting as intermediary, would go to the bereaved kin and beg forgiveness for the crime. If they agreed, the "danya" (judge) would set the "semanya", (the amount of blood-money); formerly a minimum of 80 Maria-Theresa Thalers (now Eth$1000 = US $4000).[1/2] It is noteworthy that this tradition is so strong that even the modern Ethiopian court in Addis Ababa often sets the damages for

122. See MacDonald, D.D.: "Djinn", (in) Encyclopedia of Islam, pp. 1045-1046, and Trimmingham: Islam in Ethiopia, p. 260.

1/2 [valuation given here is not in agreement with that given elsewhere - probably should read "US $1460)."-Analyst]

682 754 manslaughter of an average citizen, killed e.g. in an automobile accident, or by a trigger-happy policeman, at "semanya" on its present monetary level.

755 Other types of ganyen disease are forms of epilepsy, "haut mal", referred to by the Amhara as "ganyën yazä" (lit. the ganyen has seized him; plural is "aganent". In this case, a dabtara is often called in and tries to exorcise the evil spirit with magic formulae; sometimes the woggesha doctor tries to intoxicate the patient with [278] a paste of "assärkush täbbätäbkush" (Cissus adenautha), which drug finally lets him have some rest. In contrast, the method of the täñqway is literally a bag of tricks.

755 756 789 In his role as magician, the täñqway is called "qumMa" (from "qomä", he stood up), for he tries to identify the personality of the evil spirit from his abode; e.g. in the water of a brook, or a waterhole in the river, or under a certain tree, etc. The magician is also considered an expert on fire and lightning. When a person is struck by lightning, "mäbräq" (lit. Thunder), [761] the priests consider it heavenly punishment and in the past even refused to bury the victim in the churchyard; thus the täñqway is called in. His treatment consists of moving the victim quickly to the fireplace - for he regards fire and warm ashes as the counteracting principle. If a house is on fire in town, it is still believed that the magician, standing on the roof of a neighboring house with a mirror, can prevent the spreading of the fire by causing the flames to recoil.

Cases of drowning are his specialty also. This too is considered by the church a heavenly punishment for hidden crimes, for the victim is regarded as having been surrendered to the "demons";

829 pattern continues in full force even at present. As a result, the high official is as hesitant about delegating authority downward (which might build up a potential rival), as the inferior in the hierarchy fears to accept delegated authority (lest the superior repent of his grant and suspect rebellion). In consequence, daily problems, even routine ones, are regularly referred for decision to the superior in the hierarchy of government.

812 The authoritarian "literalness" which characterizes so many Amhara attitudes may at least in part be the effect of religious fundamentalism. Until recently, the "Fetha Nagast" criminal and [681] civil code was literally enforced, including the cutting off of hands for theft and of feet for rebellion. Biblical passages are interpreted literally, by the priests. In monasteries, the monks exclude the presence of even female animals such as cows.

[779] The church, sacerdotal in its concepts and rituals, does not feel that it owes an explanation to anyone; and "literalness" has remained unchallenged (except during the relatively brief Portuguese episode). In the Amhara view, there is a direct and unilateral connection between cause and effect, and paradoxes that result from such oversimplifications are ignored: e.g. the tallest obelisk at Aksum, which has fallen and broken into several large pieces, is claimed to have been "pushed" over by the Falasha Queen Judith, despite the fact that another, almost as tall, still stands nearby.

● [682] Homicide, especially if accidental, is blamed on the "zanyen" spirits who pushed the murderer's hand.

647 Literal obedience dominates the governmental administration, for no subordinate would arrogate to himself the privilege of "interpret" the spirit of the law handed down by the official of superior status.

5: Bruce T-5 (1768-1773) 1804
MP5 Amhara MP5

692 nishes all persons by that authority, even those of the Abuna's family, without any sort of deference paid to him; and this, as appears by the judges, or king's records, is of very ancient standing. The king calls an assembly of the clergy when he pleases, generally with the advice of the Abuna, and there is none considered legal if he is not present, if in the kingdom.

●[682] Welled Hayrat (Ras Michael's son) was excommunicated for killing a refugee at the Abuna's feet, in consequence of which he confiscated the Abuna's villages in Tigre, nor was the curse ever taken off *. The Itchegue, or prior of the
693 monks, if he be chosen a lay-man, must be ordained by the
793 Abuna. He is named by the king, who nominates all superiors of monasteries. The Lika-cahanat, or chief of the priests, is ordained by the Abuna and Itchegue, who both hold a corner of a scarf put upon him. He is an inquisitor of morals among the priests, and has so much salt and cloth from each district. A priest at his ordination pays three salts to the Abuna. He comes to the house of the latter, enters, and kisses the threshold. The Abuna, sitting on a sofa at one end of the room, reads the Scriptures to himself. Then having paid his salt, the person retires and kisses the threshhold, returning without imposition of hands, or any ceremony. Old men are made priests, and young men deacons by a simple jussit. More probable accounts say, that there is only one salt paid, that the person stands at the door, while the Abuna, having made the sign of the cross, holding it in his hand, says, "I have ordained you a priest." The person then enters the room, kisses the cushion of the sofa, and retires. Many are ordained that can neither read nor write.

[764] The Abyssinians have an office for the dead; and worship
778 pictures of saints, even such as are not consecrated. This we had an opportunity of seeing, every time we were obliged to draw some Madonna. All those that saw it, kissed the
000 ground before it, with their foreheads on the earth. The

* The Abuna's house is a kind of sanctuary, in which criminals are protected from massacre, not from trial. They are sometimes tried there by the royal judges, or dragged from it to the tribunal.

[p. 56]

231
[556] ("agabba") to an important "great man", perhaps to become a "client" in his retinue for protection.

[775] In religious life, the old peasant can arrange for the peace of his soul after death by giving a cow to his Confessor or to the "qēs gabaz" the administrative priest of the parish church, to have masses recited. In criminal law, a murderer in the remote rural areas can still save himself and even prevent a long and bloody feud between families, if he can borrow enough cattle, in addition to his own, to pay "blood-money", in cows, to the kin of the victim, the agreement witnessed by the presence of a "cheqa shum", a judge, or a priest, preferably all three. Thus there are some aspects of the cattle pattern that are reminiscent of a tribal, semi-nomadic, rather than settled territorial social organization. This becomes emphasized during the upland trek in the rainy season.

233 Though entrusted to youngsters, care of cattle is obviously a task requiring responsibility. Cattle is not taken out until one hour after sunrise, about 7 A.M., when the dew has dried. During the hot dry season, cattle rest under umbrella trees and other shade from 11 A.M. to 4 P.M., so that the grazing period away from the hamlet is not long. Before dusk, by 6 P.M., they are taken into the hamlet enclosure or corrall, or even into the hut, for hyenas may come early.

The cash value of cattle is low, primarily because of the distance and poor transportation to world markets. [281] The hides, a major export item, are of low cash value because this type is not tanned, merely sundried, and "book-folded" for export.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

people everywhere with plenty of food and drink, the Amhara outlook would see in such a condition the prelude to mass civil war.

828 261 273

The Good Life

When asked what is their chief goal in life, Amhara peasants frequently respond with the expression *sarto mablät* ("having worked, to eat"). This response says many things. It reflects their constant preoccupation with the need to eat. It suggests that having enough to feed oneself, one's family, and one's guests is the farthest horizon toward which the peasants normally aspire. It also implies that in order to eat one should work by the sweat of his brow; it praises independence and self-reliance.

565* 261 181 [577]

In raising their children Amhara peasants consciously strive to prepare them for making a living on their own. It is shameful to be dependent on others. It is worse yet to steal. Parents instill in their children a dread of becoming a thief. To be called *lēbā*, or "thief," is—except when in fun—a terrible insult. Stealing is felt to be somewhat worse than murder. In a survey of forty rural Amhara youths asked to name the six worst actions in the eyes of the local populace, eighty-five per cent mentioned stealing, and often under two or three different names; while only sixty per cent mentioned killing, and this answer was sometimes qualified as "killing without justification" or "killing by means of poison." One peasant commented on this question by observing, "You never kill a man unless he has done something wrong; but stealing, that is the sin."

565* 866 867 673 685 682 577

The concept of *sarto mablät* further implies that work is good. It expresses admiration for the industrious farmer. A majority of our TAT respondents preferred that one among twenty-five cards which showed a peasant hard at work in the fields. Agricultural work is idealized in Abyssinia because it promotes the virtues of independence and honesty. If fate concurs, it may even lead to wealth. And in any case it trains and shows one to be *guabaz*, a hero in man's work, for it is no small feat to toil from dawn till moonlight in the busy seasons or half a day on an empty stomach on fasting days.

565* 461 [125] [577]

Nevertheless, those observers are not wholly wrong who speak, like Griaule, of "the little penchant for work among the people."[13] Status considerations keep the Amhara from making a fetish of work as such. He looks down on the work of artisans because of their association with the evil eye. He avoids when possible unskilled manual labor, for traditionally that has been relegated to slaves or servants from "inferior" tribes. Work for wages is likewise deemed undignified. If one must work for someone else, it should be in the context of a more personal relationship—as a retainer, for example. Women are especially sensitive about this and much prefer to serve a man as his temporary wife than as a salaried housekeeper. Finally, although the peasant aspires "to eat, having worked," he is not wholly impervious to the appeal of the more